



Week of April 30, 2012

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Green Power

PG&E Announces New Green Energy Program to Give Electric Customers More Renewable Options

"Green Option" Reflects PG&E's Commitment to Clean Energy and Customer Choice

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) said today that it has asked state regulators for permission to offer a new clean energy program that will give electric customers an opportunity to support 100 percent renewable energy for an average of a few dollars a month. PG&E is proposing the "Green Option" in response to requests from customers, elected officials, and the environmental community for more ways to promote renewable energy.

"On behalf of our customers, PG&E is already one of the largest suppliers of renewable energy in the country," said Helen Burt, Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer of PG&E. "We have heard from many of our customers, however, who want to do even more to support clean energy and the green economy. Our Green Option, backed by an independent third-party's environmental certification, will give them that choice." [Read more](#). Source: PRNewswire via COMTEX, 4/24/12

The USA's Biggest Green Electricity Users

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has updated its Top 50 Green Power Partnership rankings, with Microsoft entering the top five and McDonald's USA also making its debut appearance on the Top 50 list.

During the previous reporting update, Intel was sourcing 88 percent of its electricity

from green sources including power purchase agreements with wind and solar farms, plus through its own on-site generation; a percentage that remains unchanged. [Read more](#). *Source: Energy Matters, 4/25/12*

EPA Releases List of Top 50 Green-Powered Organizations — Intel, Kohl's, Microsoft rank in top three

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released an updated list of the Top 50 Green Power Partnership organizations voluntarily using clean, renewable electricity from resources such as solar, wind, and low-impact hydropower. Intel Corporation tops the list as the largest single user of green power, followed by Kohl's Department Stores and Microsoft Corporation. Combined, the Top 50 partners are using more than 15 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power annually. Through their use of green power, these top organizations are avoiding carbon pollution equal to that created by the electricity use of more than 1.3 million American homes each year. [Read more](#). *Source: EPA Green Power Partnership, 4/23/12*

Beauty Company Leads Way With Largest Wind Project of Any Manufacturer in U.S.

As Earth Day approaches, hair-care manufacturer Zotos International celebrates 3.3 MW wind energy project

Earth Day will be extra special this year for hair-care manufacturer Zotos International Inc. as the company celebrates the largest wind project of any manufacturer in the United States and meets its goal of using 100 percent renewable energy for its electrical needs.

Zotos' 3.3 MW on-site, wind energy project, which powers its 670,000-square-foot manufacturing plant in Geneva, is a first in the beauty industry. The project is comprised of two 1,650 kW wind turbines.

"After years of hard work, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to sustainability, we have finally achieved a key milestone toward our vision of sustainable beauty," said Anthony Perdigao, Vice President, Operations, and Chief Sustainability Officer at Zotos. "This is a historic moment for Zotos, our parent company, and our community. If we can do it, so can others." [Read more](#). *Source: PR Newswire via Zotos International, 4/20/12*

Visit U.S. DOE EERE [Green Power Network](#) for more information.

Renewable Energy Technologies

Energy Department Announces \$9 Million to Improve Solar Forecasting

As part of the SunShot Initiative, the Energy Department today announced \$9 million available this year to help utilities and grid operators better forecast when, where, and how much solar power will be produced at U.S. solar energy plants. Enhanced solar forecasting will allow power system operators to integrate more solar energy into the electricity grid, and ensure the economic and reliable delivery of renewable energy to American families and businesses. This funding underscores the Obama Administration's commitment to boosting America's energy security, expanding the U.S. solar market, and increasing domestic energy production from all available sources, including solar. [Read more](#). Source: DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, 4/23/12

Wind power: America's future?

Wind power is currently the largest nonwater source of renewable energy in the US, and its use has grown by 350 percent since 2006.

Generation from wind turbines in the United States increased 27 percent in 2011 from the prior year, and is up 350 percent since 2006.

"During the past five years capacity additions of wind turbines were the main driver of the growth in wind power output," the U.S. Department of Energy reported. "As the amount of wind generation increases, electric power system operators have faced challenges with integrating increasing amounts of this intermittent generation source into their systems." [Read more](#). Source: Christian Science Monitor, 4/13/12

A2LA Accredits Small Wind Certification Council Allows International Recognition of SWCC Ratings

The Small Wind Certification Council (SWCC) has obtained ISO Guide 65 accreditation from the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) to certify small wind turbines to AWEA Standard 9.1-2009.

SWCC certifies small wind turbines against standards published by the American Wind Energy Association. Certification of wind turbines ensures that turbine designs are tested and evaluated according to industry standards for performance and safety. [Read more](#). Source: Small Wind Certification Council, 4/17/12

Dam's renewable energy inspiring

President Barack Obama is a gifted speaker, but he missed an opportunity to crystallize his administration's push to develop renewable energy during a recent visit to a solar power panel facility outside Boulder City.

Obama fights to be heard above a chorus of critics of the technological and economical practicality of solar, wind and geothermal energy. Billions have been spent to improve the technology and fast-track the production of solar panels and wind turbines. [Read more](#). Source: *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 4/15/12

U.S. Wind Energy Capacity Growth Up 31 Percent in 2011

U.S. wind power capacity grew 31 percent in 2011, accounting for 35 percent of all new electricity generation capacity, the American Wind Energy Association said.

The U.S. wind industry installed 6.8 gigawatts last year, to reach total capacity of 46.9 gigawatts, according to an annual market report released by the industry group in New York today. [Read more](#). Source: *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 4/12/12

Past The Politics: The Section 1603 Program's Impact On Jobs, Economy

Federal renewable energy incentives have come under their fair share of scrutiny following the demise of solar company Solyndra, which received a \$535 million U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) loan guarantee in 2009.

Less talk, however, has been made of a separate incentive program that has achieved a considerable degree of success in spurring not only renewable energy development, but also jobs and the national economy. [Read more](#). Source: *North American Wind Power*, 4/10/12

Learn more about [renewable resources](#).

Outreach, Education, Reports & Studies

Webinar looks at fuel cells for Federal facilities

Learn about the guide [Procuring Fuel Cells for Stationary Power: A Guide for Federal Facility Decision Makers](#) (7.19 MB pdf) on May 8, 12 to 1 PM, EDT.

The U.S. Department of Energy recently issued the guide to aid Federal facilities managers wishing to implement fuel cell stationary power sources on Federal sites. The report was developed with support from the Department's Oak Ridge National

Laboratory and presents concise, step-by-step recommendations to help Federal decision makers more easily transform their interest in fuel cell technologies into successful installations.

The Fuel Cell Technologies Program webinars are free. Advanced registration is required to receive a URL and password to watch webinars online and the phone number to listen to audio. The program provides information here for upcoming and past webinars. The webinar will include an overview of the guide and answer any questions from participants. [Register to attend](#) this free event. *Source: DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, 4/25/12*

Webinar offers overview of Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency

On Tuesday, May 8, from 1-2 PM (EDT), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Green Power Partnership will host a webinar to provide participants an introduction to the [Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency](#) (DSIRE).

DSIRE is a comprehensive source of information on local, state, federal, and utility incentives and policies that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. For this webinar, Amy Heinemann, a senior policy analyst with DSIRE, will focus on incentives and policies available to businesses, municipalities, institutions, and other organizations utilizing and/or generating electricity from a renewable energy resource. Through this webinar, participants will learn about available renewable energy incentives and policies, the DSIRE database, and how to effectively use the database to identify available incentives for their organization. The webinar will conclude with a question and answer session.

[Register](#) for this webinar. [Read more](#). *Source: EPA Green Power Partnership, 4/24/12*

Study examines U.S. solar technology potential

The objective of the SunShot Vision Study is to provide an in-depth assessment of the potential for solar technologies to meet a significant share of electricity demand in the United States during the next several decades. Specifically, it explores a future in which the price of solar technologies declines by about 75 percent between 2010 and 2020 - in line with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) SunShot Initiative's targets. [Read more](#). *Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 4/18/12*

Energy Department Announces \$5 Million to Assess Upgrade Opportunities at Hydropower Facilities

In support of President Obama's all-of-the-above energy strategy, the Energy Department today announced up to \$5 million available this year to assess

opportunities to increase power production at up to 40 existing hydropower facilities around the nation. Through this competitive funding opportunity, the Department will work with hydropower professionals to conduct standardized assessments to identify opportunities to increase generation and value at hydropower plants—already the nation's largest source of renewable energy. As much of America's aging hydropower infrastructure is more than 50 years old, this effort could help accelerate the deployment of upgrades at existing hydropower facilities, creating clean energy jobs, supporting our nation's economic competitiveness, and increasing the supply of renewable energy to American families and businesses. [Read more](#). Source: DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, 4/17/12

Grid-scale Energy Storage: Lux Predicts \$113.5 Billion in Global Demand by 2017

Last month Lux Research released a bottom-up evaluation of the cost effectiveness of eight energy storage technologies in six grid-scale applications throughout 44 countries, including all 50 U.S. states. Their report titled *Grid Storage under the Microscope: Using Local Knowledge to Forecast Global Demand* predicts that annual global demand for grid-scale energy storage will reach an astounding 185.4 gigawatt-hours (GWh) by 2017 and represent a \$113.5 billion incremental revenue opportunity for an industry that currently generates sales of \$50 to \$60 billion a year. [Read more](#). Source: Renewable Energy World, 4/5/12

Energy Department Report Finds Major Potential to Increase Clean Hydroelectric Power

As part of President Obama's all-out, all-of-the-above energy strategy, the Energy Department today released a renewable energy resource assessment detailing the potential to develop electric power generation at existing dams across the United States that aren't currently equipped to produce power. The report estimates that without building a single new dam, these available hydropower resources, if fully developed, could provide an electrical generating capacity of more than 12 gigawatts (GW), equivalent to roughly 15 percent of current U.S. hydropower capacity. These findings demonstrate one of the ways the nation can diversify its energy portfolio while achieving the Administration's goal of generating 80 percent of our nation's electricity from clean resources by 2035. [Read more](#). Source: EERE Progress Alerts, 4/17/12

Learn more about [education and outreach activities](#).

News from Washington

Energy Department Announces Funding to Develop "Plug-and-Play" Solar Energy Systems for Homeowners

As part of the Energy Department's SunShot Initiative, U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu today announced up to \$5 million available this year to develop "plug-and-play" photovoltaic (PV) systems that can be purchased, installed, and operational in one day. This effort is part of the Department's broader strategy to spur solar power deployment by reducing non-hardware, or "soft" costs, such as installation, permitting, and interconnection, which currently amount to more than half of the total cost of residential systems. The funding will help drive innovations to fundamentally change the design and installation of residential PV systems, reducing costs for homeowners and simplifying installations and grid connectivity. [Read more](#). Source: EERE Progress Alert, 4/24/12

Learn more about [national activities](#).

State Activities, Marketing & Market Research

Moving from energy policy to energy plan

Around the time The Bahamas was gaining independence, Denmark was in the midst of the worldwide energy crisis.

At the time, the country was 99 percent dependent on foreign oil. It vowed to never be crippled by this dependence again. True, many countries took steps to curb their behavior during the crisis, but most of us went back to our wasteful ways when the crisis ended.

This country has already met the European Union 2020 guidelines. It achieved its goals through visionary leadership, public buy-in and, let's face it, the highest taxes in Europe. The government was able to get the public behind this idea by educating them about the importance of making changes, providing substantial concessions on "A" rated home appliances (the most efficient and generally the most expensive) and making these elite products affordable to 90 percent of the population. [Read more](#). Source: Nassau Guardian, 4/24/12

GEO Report to Members for April 2012

The Geothermal Exchange Organizations has gathered news highlights for industry. This month's stories include:

- [Maryland Geothermal Heat Pump RPS Bill Passes](#)

- [GEO Board of Directors Reorganization](#)
- [GEO Groundswell of Support](#)
- [GEO Supports California GHP Bill](#)
- [GEO Defines The Geothermal Spectrum](#)
- [Use of GHP Systems Rising](#)
- [HOMES Act Will Include GHPs Under Efficiency Rebate Rules](#)
- [Geothermal pumps see lower energy bills, rising demand](#)
- [Energy Star 20th Anniversary](#)
- [Tufts University Geology Professor's New Energy Source Gaining Steam](#)
- [Canadian GHP Industry Report for 2011](#)
- [New NEGPA Website Offers More](#)
- [2012 IGSHPA Request for Presentations](#)

Source: Geothermal Exchange Organization, 4/18/12

New Florida Law Creates Renewable Energy Production Tax Credit

New [legislation](#), which was allowed to become law without Florida Gov. Rick Scott's signature, contains several provisions relating to renewable energy, energy-efficiency and alternative fuels for motor vehicles.

Among these provisions is a renewable energy production credit against the corporate income tax based on \$0.01/kWh of renewable energy produced. The cap is \$1 million per corporation and \$5 million for state fiscal year 2012-2013, which is increased to \$10 million for 2013-2014 through 2016-2017, with provisions for prorating credits if claims exceed the annual cap.

The legislation also institutes a renewable energy technologies investment tax credit against the corporate income tax based on investment in equipment to be used in production, storage and distribution of renewable fuels. The cap is \$1 million per corporation and \$10 million total per state fiscal year. The definition of "renewable fuel" includes fuels other than ethanol, such as biobutanol.

The bill passed overwhelming by a 38-2 vote in the state Senate and a 113-1 vote in the state House. The provisions take effect July 1. *Source: North American Wind Power, 4/17/12*

Pattern's Spring Valley Wind Project Reaches Settlement Agreement

Nevada's first wind project will begin operating in July

Pattern Energy Group LP (Pattern) today announced that its Spring Valley Wind project has settled a lawsuit by reaching an agreement, together with the Bureau of Land Management, the Center for Biological Diversity and Western Watersheds Project. The settlement was accepted by the Federal District court in Nevada on

March 29, 2012, and the lawsuit was dismissed. [Read more](#). Source: PR Newswire via Pattern Energy, 4/17/12

Learn more about [energy analysis](#).

Grants, RFPs & Other Funding News

Western publishes RFI for purchasing wind generation

At the request of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and their consultant Citizens Energy Corporation, Western is seeking interest from its Upper Great Plains customers regarding the purchase of renewable energy from wind power projects on tribal reservations. The ultimate purpose of the Request for Information is to identify parties interested in developing power purchase agreements. Deadline for submission is May 11, 2012. [Read more](#). Source: Western Area Power Administration, 4/23/12

VanNess Feldman launches Federal funding information site

Earlier this month, we announced the launch of our Federal Funding Resource Center an online information tool designed to inform our clients and friends about key energy-, environment-, and resource-related federal funding opportunities across a range of federal agencies including the Departments of Energy, Defense, Agriculture, and the Interior. The Federal Funding Resource Center, which is updated daily, compiles active federal funding opportunity announcements in one place for ease of review. The Federal Funding Resource Center also includes a Primer on the federal funding process. [Read more](#). Source: VanNess Feldman, 4/17/12

Learn more about [funding solicitations](#).

This news item comes to you as a service of Western's [Renewable Resources Program](#).